

this bill could help to fund 736 worthy, needed, and fully-screened transit projects that could be started in less than 90 days. Increasing funding for capital transit systems will help states to create new jobs quickly, the precise goal that H.R. 1 seeks to accomplish.

Additionally, this funding will help local transit agencies meet increased demand for public transit nationwide. In the first half of 2008, demand for public transit rose 4.4 percent over the record highs of 2007. In New Jersey, NJ Transit is providing more than 900,000 weekday trips on its trains, buses and light-rail vehicles. Public transit agencies are struggling to keep up with demand, and many of them are considering raising their fares in order to afford necessary improvements to their facilities. This amendment would provide this much needed funding to keep public transportation moving and affordable.

Supporting public transportation, especially passenger rail, should be a central element of our national strategy to slow the rate of global climate change and reduce our dependence on foreign fuels. Passenger rail consumes 21 percent less energy per passenger mile than automobiles and 17 percent less than airplanes. It releases half the amount of greenhouse gases per passenger mile as either air or car travel. Public transportation is an essential component of easing traffic congestion, reducing wear and tear on roads, protecting our environment, and preserving open space in New Jersey and across the country.

This amendment will create jobs, protect our environment, and aid struggling public transit agencies, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

IN HONOR OF BILL MELDRUM

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 2, 2009*

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Bill Meldrum, 53, captain of the trawler Lydia J, who tragically passed away on the morning of January 27 in a deck accident. Captain Meldrum, the secretary of the Board of Directors of the Point Pleasant Fisherman's Dock Cooperative, had been a fisherman in New Jersey for over 30 years—20 years out of the Belford Seafood Co-Op in my district, and 10 years out of Point Pleasant. He is described by the Fisherman's Dock Cooperative as "having a heart of gold" and "one of their best." Captain Meldrum is survived by his wife, Isabel, whom he wed in August of 2008.

Captain Meldrum purchased the Lydia J in 1989 with his friend Gary Traczyk. Already an experienced seaman, the purchase of the Lydia J allowed Captain Meldrum to continue sweeping the New Jersey coast for summer flounder, scallops, black flounder, whiting, and squid. The Lydia J was his pride and joy, and Captain Meldrum was known to stand tall and proud whenever he approached the 65 foot dragger.

Recreational and commercial fishing is not only essential to the economy of New Jersey's sixth district, but is a way of life for many of its residents. A fisherman through and through, Captain Meldrum exemplified the blue-collar strength of New Jersey's coastal

community. Not only was he able to live his dream and fish for a living, he was constantly giving back to his community. Captain Meldrum donated toys to children every Christmas and always took special care of his fellow fishermen.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in remembering the late Captain Meldrum. Everyday fishermen risk their lives on the open water to put food on our tables, and on Tuesday morning they lost one of their best in Bill Meldrum.

**"ON THE RECORD INAUGURAL  
SPEECH CONTEST"**

**HON. JOHN P. SARBANES**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 2, 2009*

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share the award winning entry from the Meritalk "On the Record Inaugural Speech Contest." Meritalk is an online community that seeks to promote civic discussion and serve as the crossroads for IT and public policy. This contest challenged American authors to write a speech highlighting what they would like to hear from the President-elect on Inauguration day. This a wonderful example of how the Internet can help Americans become more aware of and involved in government. I would like to congratulate the winner, Ms. Katherine Grayson, on writing a very eloquent speech and I hope she remains engaged in the important issues facing our country. I'd also like to share her contest entry with you today.

"My fellow citizens of the world. I cannot greet you today using the phrase "My fellow Americans," for though, assuredly, America is facing its greatest challenges in half a century, we now are part of a much vaster order with challenges that put even our own, here at home, into proper perspective.

We stand at the precipice of a New Age; an age in which we clearheadedly acknowledge that the world has become a network as intricately intertwined as a web. In ways too numerous to count, we now are connected to one another across this land, across the seas, across the airwaves, across cyberspace. The era of rattling sabers at one another or constructing foreign policy as though we dwell inside fortresses, is long over. Our world today is indeed a complex and inexorably interwoven network of threads, and to survive and flourish within it, no successful international policy will ever again be identified as "foreign." Once we only dreamt of such connectedness with the world; now we truly are a global network of nations, states, citizens, and the children everywhere who are our hope for the future.

Yet by clinging to attitudes of the past, we have been slashing away at this fragile new mesh of mankind and weakening it, the world at large, and our own position in that world. Shall we continue to allow this planet to become a more and more dangerous place, with aggression, resentment, and even silence between countries expanding as rapidly as their arsenals do? Or shall we at last—and with the determination of what has long been the greatest nation on this Earth—seek to strengthen the ties between the world's na-

tions, and help to construct, finally, a lasting fabric of world peace and understanding?

All of you who hear me today, wherever you may be, must be partners in this quest to make the world a refuge for all. We are now inextricably tied to one another, wherever we are, and rather than curse the condition of our connectedness, we must protect that connectedness at all cost.

Now we are partners in the mission to end the scourge of terrorism and the outrageous inequities of life that feed it: poverty, powerlessness, the daily struggle to survive. It is just too easy for us to think of ourselves as separate "constituencies" of the world, nameless people lost in faceless masses hoping to be served by their leadership. From today, henceforth, we are partners in the mandate to make the world a much less dangerous place; to bring a New Age of peace and understanding to our fellow men and women, wherever they may reside on our planet. We are partners in the challenge to bring the peoples of the world together, rather than shut them out through our fear and our ignorance.

These are no small challenges. But neither are they dreams.

How shall we set about to change the world as it must change, if we are to endure in the decades and centuries to come?

First, by re-forging and strengthening the fabric of our lives here at home. To put it plainly, right now we are no example for the other nations of the world. Through a long series of misjudgments and missteps, wrong-headed international decisions and self-interested actions here at home, our nation has come to forfeit that position and that privilege. We must face the fact that we have lost our way; that in the cycles of history, we have suffered a downward turn.

Clearly, our economy—once the envy of the world—is in trouble. We must confront this truth head-on. And while quick fixes and mammoth infusions of capital are band-aids designed to temporarily stabilize floundering financial vessels like Fannie Mae and AIG, as in most critical financial downturns we need to look to the core of these very serious problems and re-examine, re-tool, and rebuild the fundamentals of our economic structure, if necessary. And I strongly believe it is necessary.

Yet what are the fundamentals of that system? They are capitalistic, to be sure. But that term, capitalism—which once had the sweet ring of democracy to it—has come to take on a sour taste indeed.

Since when do the tenets of capitalism dictate that company CEOs can become robber barons? Where is it written that employees can lose their pensions to the senior management of the corporations they have dutifully served for decades? Which principles decreed that hardworking, law-abiding folks should lose their homes and life savings because the mortgages they took out were based upon Wall Street hocus-pocus of which they could have no knowledge or understanding whatsoever? Why does capitalism preclude a government's ability to ensure that all citizens are provided adequate health care and social security so that they neither succumb to illness nor die homeless on the street? And which founding father (who had himself fled from the tyranny of taxation without representation) declared that the best way to build a financially able and resilient society was to tax the working backbone of the nation until it collapsed